

transcribed by Anjali Uhlig, Class of 2009

For the Advocate of Moral Reform

What are the Duties of Women at the present Time ?

Worcester, 10th month 4th, 1837

My dear sister - The solemn and important query often arises in my mind, "What are the duties of women at the momentous crisis?" We are living in such an artificial state of society and are so trammelled by the "tradition of men," that it is difficult to disencumber the mind of all extraneous matter, all merely human judgment, and erect a standard of duty and usefulness, from the only safe guide, the Holy Scriptures. We come to the perusal of that volume, with our minds filled with preconceived opinions and prejudices; we are ignorant of the language in which it was written, and we do not allow ourselves to investigate any points, which have been long settled in the judgment of man, predicated upon the English translation, as if the translators were under the immediate inspiration of God, and every word they wrote was infallibly the mind of the Spirit. We would rather charge the holy men of old, with contradicting themselves of important points, as we do St. Paul, when he tells us in the 11th of 1st Cor. How we are to be appaeled when we preach and pray in public assemblies - and the 14th, that women are o keep silence in the churches, &c.; and we shrink from an examination of these thins, because we love the old way of ease - we forget that it is the laborers who receive wages, and too many of us rejoice that the Bible, as we suppose, affords us a warrant for sitting down in our ceiled houses, and doing little or nothing for the regeneration of a fallen world; and those who do undertake to labor, are the scorn and ridicule of their own and the other sex. We are so little accustomed to think for ourselves, that we submit to the dictum of prejudice, and of usurped authority, almost without n effort to redeem ourselves from the unhallowed shackles which have so long bound us; almost without a desire to rise from that degradation and bondage, to which we have been consigned by man, and by which the faculties of our minds, and the powers of our spiritual nature, have been prevented from expanding their full growth, and are sometimes wholly crushed.

The first duty, I believe, which devolves on our sex now, is to think for themselves, to take the volume of inspiration in their hand, to enter into their closet and to ask wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth liberally and upbraided not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. To comprehend our duties, we must understand our own moral nature, our heaven-imparted rights, and our vast responsibilities growing out of those rights,. Heretofore, woman has been regarded and has regarded herself, as a gift to man, a thing crated to fill up the measure of his greatness and his happiness, as the monarch of this lower world. This idea appears to me altogether at variance with the character of God, and the majesty of our immortal nature. If God created woman as a mere appendage to man, then he designed

1) woman's duties
2) woman's rights
3) woman's position in society
4) woman's education
5) woman's work

that man should be her God, and that she should have access to her Maker, through the medium of man; if I admit that woman was given to man, I must admit his unlimited power over her, both temporally and spiritually. I see no stopping place, and as I cannot charge my maker with having given one half of his accountable creatures into the keeping of the other half, equally corrupt with themselves, without accusing him of absurdity and injustice, I cannot sanction the long received opinion, that woman is "God's last and best gift to man." I turn to my Bible to see where Milton and his unthinking admirers got this idea, so fraught with injury to woman, and I find nothing there, to substantiate the notion; so far from it, I find that God created THEM in his own image, crowned THEM with the diadem of glory and honor, and gave THEM dominion over the fish of the sea, &c., and blessed THEM. At no subsequent period was this grant to woman, any more than to man, revoked, and hence I conclude they are standing on the same platform of human rights, under the immediate government of God, amenable to no tribunal but his, and that it is in vain for us to attempt to shield our unfaithfulness and disobedience, under the plausible pretext, that we must submit to the government of man. If this were true, then Jehovah should have furnished us with another Bible, where we are pointed to man as our lawgiver, our judge and our king, and provided another Savior; for as Harriet Martineau justly remarks, two orders of beings require different codes of laws, and a different mode of redemption. Nothing has enveloped the mind in more ignorance and uncertainty, than the false idea that the mere circumstance of sex does not determine these points, and yet we cling to the notion with as much pertinacity as though the decree were immutable, and it were sin to doubt.

Until we comprehend the design of God in the creation of woman; until we take our stand, side by side with our brother; until we read all the precepts of the Bible as addressed to woman as well as to man, and lose, in our moral, intellectual, and immortal nature, the consciousness of sex, we shall never fulfill the end of our existence. We are constantly busying ourselves, with vain endeavors to discover the exact point, where the duties of men and women diverge, and setting up a standard of perfection for each to aim at, thus merging the spiritual in the physical nature, and creating a distinction which God never made. Duties belong to situation, not to sex; a mother has duties totally different from a single woman; but the rights and responsibilities of men and women as moral beings are identical, and must necessarily be so, if their nature is the same, and their relations to the supreme Being precisely similar. "With regard to all moral reformatations, men and women have the same

- See letters published in the N. E. Spectator, on the Province of Woman.

duties and the same rights." The ground I take on this point is very plain. I wish to spare you, I wish to spare myself, the worthless and disgusting task of replying in detail to all the coarse attacks and flattering sophisms, by which men have endeavored to entice, or drive women from almost every sphere of moral action.

"Go home and spin," is the well meaning advice of the domestic tyrant of the old school. "Conquer by personal charms, and fashionable attractions," is the brilliant career marked out for her, by the idols and the idolaters of fashion. "Never step out of the bounds of decorum, and the customary ways of doing good;" is the sage advice of maternal caution. "Rule by obedience, and by submission sway;" is the golden saying of the moralist poet, sanctioning female servitude, and pointing out a resort and a compensation, in female cunning. What with the fear of the insolent remarks about women, in which those of the dominant sex, whose bravery is the generous offspring of conscious impunity, are particularly apt to indulge; and with the still stronger fear of being thought unfeminine, it is indeed a proof of uncommon moral courage, or of an overpowering sense of religious duty and sympathy with the oppressed, the guilty, and the outcast, that a woman is induced to embrace the unpopular, unfashionable, obnoxious principles of the moral reform, or abolition societies. Popular opinion, the habits of society, are all calculated to lead women to consider the place, the privileges, and the duties, which etiquette has assigned to them, as their peculiar portion, as more important than those which nature has given them in common with men. Men have at all times been inclined to *allow* to women *peculiar privileges*, while withholding from them **ESSENTIAL RIGHTS**. In the progress of civilization and Christianity, one right after another has been conceded, one occupation after another has been placed within the reach of woman. Still we are far from the practical acknowledgement of the simple truth, that the rational and moral nature of man, is the foundation of all rights and duties, and that women as well as men are rational and moral beings."

The present, is a deeply interesting and important period in the history of woman. The lord Jehovah has opened before her a wide field for usefulness and exertion. The cry of misery, the call for help, comes up from the fearful haunts of licentiousness; the wail of despair, the shriek of the helpless victims of cruelty and lust, is borne to our ear on every southern breeze; the maniac howl of intemperance, reaches us from the habitations of drunkenness, and pleads with trumpet tongue for our aid in driving these unclear spirits from our land. Can woman turn from so much wretchedness, and suppose that when she has been well to the ways of her household, and prepared a well spread table for her family, all her duties are performed and the end of her existence is answered, when she is neglecting duties equally important. In the present state of Christendom, every woman is acting for, or against the great work of moral reformation; every woman, let her sphere be ever so contracted, her influence ever so small, is retarding, or accelerating the spread of truth and righteousness on the earth, by her example and conversation. She is either exciting those with whom she mingles to good works, or she is settling them down at ease in Zion. There is so much to do, no one need be at any loss. So we have time, others have money, others can write, others can speak, others can take the periodicals and scatter them like seed over the land, that they may spring up, and bear fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold. Women in the present day, are

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placed in a solemn and responsible situation. Circumstances, and the entreaties of the ministry that they would come up to the work of moral reformation, have drawn them out of obscurity, and in some degree burst their bonds; light has shone up their minds, and they have been enabled to rise a little out of that state of ignorance, to which they had been consigned. Sympathy has enlarged their hearts, active benevolence has elevated their moral character, a more extended sphere of usefulness and of observation has improved their intellectual faculties, and given a higher tone to their desires and their pursuits; but still, woman falls far short of the high and holy station assigned her by her Creator. Those who are engaged in the moral reformations of the day, still measure their actions by a corrupt public opinion, and while they have nobly dared to go forward in these glorious enterprises, regardless of the esteem of a portion of mankind, they are still bound by the unseen fetters of ecclesiastical censure, and know little of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. To these women I would say, "emancipate yourselves from every kind of bondage, if the Lord require it, and this *you* only can decide. Open your mouths with wisdom, cry aloud, and spare not, show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins." Remember, to God your account has to be rendered, and no man, or body of men, can answer for us, in that day when we shall be judged "according to the deeds done in the body." Some women who are laboring for Christ, have doubtless done all that was required of them, and in the remarks I have made, I am far from wishing to depreciate their usefulness, or undervalue their sacrifices; still I believe, there is a wealth of intellect and talents for public exercises, among some who if they yielded to the impressions of duty, would be the Huldahs and the Annas of the day in which they live.

There is one class of women, who, being timid and unaccustomed to think for themselves, and to realize that they are free agents, submit to the command or the opinion of a father, a husband, or a brother, under the false idea in which they have been educated, that man is their superior. The authority he has assumed, and which they have conceded, is felt to be binding, and the conscience being fettered by this notion, they do not dare to act out the impulses of nature, or the promptings of duty. Oh! that they would learn all-important lesson, "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Pay all proper respect and deference to the opinions of relatives, but never let those opinions turn you aside from the path of duty. I have known women thus swayed, who have left sacred obligations unperformed, stifled the voice of God's Spirit, and given a deep wound to their own peace, as well as robbed the cause of virtue of their talents and their influence.

There is another class who are glad of any excuse to relieve themselves from difficult and arduous duties - who shelter themselves under the plea, that their male friends are opposed to their uniting in moral reform, or abolition efforts. Ah, my sister, do they remember that every woman has to work out her own salvation, with fear and trembling, and that these excuses will avail nothing in the

judgment of Him who saith, "All souls are mine" - "Fear not them that kill the body, and after that they have no other harm they can do: but I will forewarn you whom [you should] fear; fear him who, after he hath killed, [hastens them] to cast into hell; yea, I say unto your, fear [him most]. They may try to pacify their consciences with [all manner of] unholy subterfuges, but they can no more [foist their] responsibilities on another, than they can divest themselves of their responsibility to God. But whilst I earnestly desire [that all] men may come up to their duties in the [great task of] regenerating a fallen world, I entreat [them to do] it openly, fearlessly, trusting in the Lord. [Though it is] known some women sign petitions for the [abolition] of slavery in the District of Columbia, secretly because their husbands forbade their doing, I have approved of it. If any sufficient reason can be adduced, why woman should be *governed by the* opinion of man, any more than man by the opinion of woman, then let him be her counsellor, and her GOD; but I enter my protest against her having two masters: it makes our case too hard, and [causing us] to be double minded, and unstable in our [womanly conception] gives a mortal stab to moral rectitude)..... moment we admit the idea, that we may do good may come, we lose our self-respect, policy as our rule, instead of righteousnessdeceive a man by a *show* of submission. that you cannot obey him, rather than God It is your intention to sign that petition; but see that it is not because you love to have your own way, but because it is your duty. In all things where submission can be yielded without any dereliction of duty, carry out, to its fullest extent it, be..... Christ has commanded his disciples not to r..... Such an open and Christian course of con..... secure the esteem and confidence of almost while it will take from him the charter he.....cials he holds, to exercise all his selfish pass..... being whom he regards as his inferior, and been placed in subjection to him by Jehovah I am persuaded, if we did not love our cha..... would, after a short resistance, yield to the truth and unbind our fetters; but we loveized; we enjoy the heartless attention which(h)..... from "the generous promptings of chivalr(y).....poetry of romantic gallantry," to use the example of C. E. Beecher; we prefer homage accorded to the shrine of WOMAN, to the respect and admiration accorded to us as moral and intellectual beings). We would rather be the playthings of man, than be on an equality with him, because if we assume the dignified station of free agents, of moral beings, we would at once avow ourselves liable to the same liabilities which rest upon him. The more I think on the subject of woman's rights and duties, (the more) I am persuaded, that until she elevates herself to the appropriate sphere which God appointed her, the cause of moral reformation will move slowly forward). Remember that degradation was the first effect of sin, and [elevation and liberation] will give an impulse to public morals and uplifted sentiment, which nothing else can give. When woman is kept in her present unholy subjection, when she feels as if man was her master - she cannot move forward the glorious work of reformation, she cannot be a fellow-laborer with him in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is of unspeakable importance to wome(n) in our world, that she should disenthral her mind of the opinion which spell-binds her as by sorcery, that she is to look to man as the regulator of her actions, the prescriber of the sphere in which she is to move. It is my deep and solemn conviction, that she who first tasted of the forbidden fruit, and gave of it to man, who was the honored instrument of giving birth to the Savior of the world, is designed by her gracious Creator to set a conspicuous part in bringing in the millennial glory of his kingdom, not as a subordinate agent to man, but as a being who is standing immediately under the government of Jehovah. "The Lord God is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in THEE.

Thine in the bonds of womanhood,

Sarah M. Grimké

ADVOCATE OF MORAL REFORM.

—I mean to preserve their minds pure from the contamination of this nameless vice, by which they are surrounded. It is not from the sin itself you are warned to save them—from this, possibly, they may escape—but it is that an influence should be thrown around them that shall prevent their young minds from becoming impure, imaginations corrupt, and thoughts vicious. Can you bear that this should be the case with your beloved ones, even though they should be preserved from actual guilt? Do you not care that the minds of your children are pure and virtuous—and is it not in your power to preserve them so? Ah! how well do I remember a mother's instructions upon this truly important subject, which were given during my earliest years. "My child," she would say, "God is holy, and he sees your heart, he knows your thoughts. They will be recorded in his book of remembrance, one day to be revealed. What you think of, will help to form your character, and even the expression of your countenance—as you think, so will you act—therefore, beware, and keep your heart pure; think of nothing but what you would be willing to have written upon your face, to be read by all who pass you by." Such instructions, conveyed in the tenderest manner to the infant mind, accompanied by such prayers as will reach the throne of God, and often repeated, think you they can ever be forgotten? No—believe me, they never can till all earthly recollections are lost in the grave; their influence will be felt each day, silent, yet binding the heart to purity and virtue. A child thus instructed will never feel at liberty to reflect on subjects calculated to make the mind impure. They never will delight in it. Those pure principles form an impenetrable barrier, enshrining the heart in virtue's golden casket, and they will repel with indignation and scorn the entrance of vicious and impure thoughts. But why should I repeat what is so well known to every virtuous mind? Mothers and sisters, will you not awake to this subject? Will you not make strong and united efforts to save the rising generation from impending danger? If facts would awaken you to duty, many might be given by those employed in teaching some of your children which would alarm you, if you regard the purity of their morals and conduct. It is true that it is becoming a painful task to engage in teaching young children, on account of the existence of this very evil. Some teachers have wept and prayed in silence, because they know not what to do to remedy it. They have found it beyond the reach of their effort. Upon you then, rests the responsibility of the formation of the character of the rising generation—and is it not worth your tears, your prayers, your untiring efforts, to form them virtuous and happy? Then study to know what passes in the minds of your children. Know with whom they associate, what books they read, and how they spend their time when absent from you. Teach them to be frank and open-hearted, and let them never find a confidant in you, one who will be interested in all their affairs, however trivial they may be; then will you have an opportunity to own their true characters, and know when you are deceived by them. But little, however, can be accomplished without prayer; it is by prayer that the great work of moral reform will move forward; and do we not know that this cause is dear to the heart of God, when we consider how much he has blessed and succeeded the efforts of those engaged in the work? Who then will be discouraged and cease to act? Not those who love the God of virtue and holiness, for although an enemy may oppose and triumph, it is but for season; our God, in whom we trust, will ensure a victory.

ADLAIDE.

We gladly insert the following letter from our respected and beloved sister, because we believe free discussion is the best way to elicit truth on any subject. It is of immense importance to our sex, to possess clear and correct ideas of our rights and duties, and we trust every reader will comply with the request so frequently and earnestly preferred by the writer of the article before us, to search the scriptures and decide the question for themselves from those sacred pages. In publishing this, or any other communications on the subject, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we are not giving an expression of our own sentiments on either side of the question, but simply affording our readers an opportunity to examine and weigh the arguments and judge for themselves.

For the Advocate of Moral Reform.

What are the Duties of Woman at the present Time?

WORCESTER, 10th mo. 4th, 1837.

My dear sister—The solemn and important query often arises in my mind, "What are the duties of women at this momentous crisis?" We are living in such an artificial state of society, and are so rammed by the "tradition of men," that it is difficult to disencumber the mind of all extraneous matter, all merely human judgment, and erect a standard of duty and usefulness, from the only safe guide, the Holy Scriptures. We come to the perusal of that volume, with our minds filled with preconceived opinions and prejudices; we are ignorant of the language in which it was written, and we do not allow ourselves to investigate any points, which have been long settled in the judgment of man, predicated upon the English translation, as if the translators were under the immediate inspiration of God, and every word they wrote was infallibly the mind of the Spirit. We would rather charge the holy men of old, with contradicting themselves on important points, as we do St. Paul, when he tells us in the 11th of 1st Cor. how we are to be apparelled when we preach and pray in public assemblies—and in the 14th, that women are to keep silence in the churches, &c.; and we shrink from an examination of these things, because we love the old way of ease—we forget that it is the laborers who receive wages, and too many of us rejoice that the Bible, as we suppose, affords us a warrant for sitting down in our ceiled houses, and doing little or nothing for the regeneration of a fallen world; and those who do undertake to labor, are the scorn and ridicule of their own and the other sex. We are so little accustomed to think for ourselves, that we submit to the dictum of prejudice, and of usurped authority, almost without an effort to redeem ourselves from the unhallowed shackles which have so long bound us; almost without a desire to rise from that degradation and bondage, to which we have been consigned by man, and by which the faculties of our minds, and the powers of our spiritual nature, have been prevented from expanding to their full growth, and are sometimes wholly crushed.

The first duty, I believe, which devolves on our sex now, is to think for themselves, to take the volume of inspiration in their hand, to enter into their closet, and to ask wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." To comprehend our duties, we must understand our own moral nature, our heaven-imparted rights, and our vast responsibilities

growing out of those rights. Heretofore, woman has been regarded and has regarded herself, as a gift to man, a thing created to fill up the measure of his greatness and his happiness, as the monarch of this lower world. This idea appears to me altogether at variance with the character of God, and the majesty of our immortal nature. If God created woman as a mere appendage to man, then he designed that man should be her God, and that she should have access to her Maker, through the medium of man; if I admit that woman was given to man, I must admit his unlimited power over her, both temporally and spiritually. I see no stopping place, and as I cannot charge my maker with having given one half of his accountable creatures into the keeping of the other half, equally corrupt with themselves, without accusing him of absurdity and injustice, I cannot sanction the long received opinion, that woman is "God's last, best gift to man." I turn to my Bible to see where Milton and his unflinching admirers got this idea, so fraught with injury to woman, and I find nothing there, to substantiate the notion; so far from it, I find that God created them in his own image, crowned them with the diadem of glory and honor, and gave them dominion over the fish of the sea, &c., and blessed them. At no subsequent period was this grant to woman, any more than to man, revoked, and hence I conclude they are standing on the same platform of human rights, under the immediate government of God, amenable to no tribunal but his, and that it is in vain for us to attempt to shield our unfaithfulness and disobedience, under the plausible pretext, that we must submit to the government of man. If this were true, then Jehovah should have furnished us with another Bible, where we are pointed to man as our lawgiver, our judge and our king, and provided another Savior; for as Harriet Martineau justly remarks, two orders of beings require different codes of laws, and a different mode of redemption. Nothing has enveloped the mind in more ignorance and uncertainty, than the false idea that the mere circumstance of sex, a circumstance necessary only to our present state of existence, is to be the criterion of duty, intelligence, responsibility, superiority and inferiority. We all acknowledge that facts demonstrate, that the circumstance of sex does not determine these points, and yet we cling to the notion with as much pertinacity as though the decree were immutable, and it were sin to doubt.

Until we comprehend the design of God in the creation of woman; until we take our stand, side by side with our brother; until we read all the precepts of the Bible as addressed to woman as well as to man, and lose, to our moral, intellectual, and immortal nature, the consciousness of sex, we shall never fulfil the end of our existence. We are constantly busying ourselves, with vain endeavors to discover the exact point, where the duties of men and women diverge, and setting up a standard of perfection for each to aim at, thus merging the spiritual in the physical nature, and creating a distinction which God never made. Duties belong to situation, not to sex; a mother has duties totally different from a single woman; but the rights and responsibilities of men and women as moral beings are identical, and must necessarily be so, if their nature is the same, and their relations to the supreme Being precisely similar. "With regard to all moral reformations, men and women have the same

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There is one class of women, who, being timid and unaccustomed to think for themselves, and to realize that they are free agents, submit to the command or the opinion of a father, a husband, or a brother, under the false idea in which they have been educated, that man is their superior. The authority he has assumed, and which they have conceded, is felt to be binding, and the conscience being fettered by this notion, they do not dare to act on the impulses of nature, or the promptings of duty. Oh! that they would learn the all-important lesson, "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Pay all proper respect and deference to the opinions of relatives, but never let those opinions turn you aside from the path of duty. I have known women thus swayed, who have left sacred obligations unperformed, stifled the voice of God's Spirit, and given a deep wound to their own peace, as well as robbed the cause of virtue of their talents and their influence.

There is another class who are glad of any excuse to relieve themselves from difficult and arduous duties—who shelter themselves under the plea, that their male friends are opposed to their uniting in moral reform, or abolition efforts. Ah, my sister, do they remember that every woman has to work out her own salvation, with fear and trembling, and that these excuses will avail nothing in the judgment of Him who saith, "All souls are mine?"—Does not them

that kill the body, and after that have no more they can do: but I will forewarn you whom fear; fear him, who, after he hath killed, has to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him. They may try to pacify their consciences unholy subterfuges, but they can no more responsibilities on another, than they can divest themselves of their rational being, and of their ability to God. But whilst I earnestly desire men may come up to their duties in the great work of regenerating a fallen world, I entreat them to do so openly, fearlessly, trusting in the Lord known some women sign petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, see cause their husbands forbade their doing I approved of it. If any sufficient reason be adduced, why woman should be governed by the opinion of man, any more than man by the opinion of woman, then let him be her counsellor, and not her master; but I enter my protest against her masters: it makes our case too hard, and to be double minded, and unstable in our reception gives a mortal stab to moral rectitude. I moment we admit the idea, that we may do good may come, we lose our self-respect, and policy as our rule, instead of righteousness deceive a man by a show of submission. that you cannot obey him, rather than God it is your intention to sign that petition; be see that it is not because you love to have your way, but because it is your duty. In all things submission can be yielded without any derogation of duty, carry out, to its fullest extent, the doctrine of non-resistance, according to the apostolic ad let him clearly understand that obedience is required, not because it is right to exact it, but because Christ has commanded his disciples not to resist. Such an open and Christian course of conduct will secure the esteem and confidence of almost every man, while it will take from him the charter he claims he holds, to exercise all his selfish passions being whom he regards as his inferior, and been placed in subjection to him by Jehovah. I am persuaded, if we did not love our character, after a short resistance, yield to the truth, and unbind our fetters; but we love to be free; we enjoy the heartless attention which comes from "the generous promptings of chivalry; poetry of romantic gallantry," to use the expression of C. E. Beecher; we prefer the homage of the shrine of woman, to the respect and accorded to us as moral and intellectual beings would rather be the playthings of man, than on an equality with him, because if we are dignified station of free agents, of moral beings at once are we ourselves liable to the same liabilities which rest upon him. The more I learn on the subject of woman's rights and duties, I am persuaded, that until she elevates herself to her appropriate sphere which God appointed for her, no moral reformations will move slowly forward. Degradation was the first effect of sin, and education will give an impulse to public morals a sentiment, which nothing else can give. Woman is kept in her present unholy subjection she feels as if man was her master—she can forward the glorious work of reformation a fellow-laborer with him in the gospel of Christ.

It is of unspeakable importance to women

world, that she should disenthral her mind of the opinion which spell-binds her as by sorcery, that she is to look to man as the regulator of her actions, the prescriber of the sphere in which she is to move. It is my deep and solemn conviction, that she who first tasted of the forbidden fruit, and gave of it to man, who was the honored instrument of giving birth to the Savior of the world, is designed by her gracious Creator to act a conspicuous part in bringing in the millennial glory of his kingdom, not as a subordinate agent to man, but as a being who is standing immediately under the government of Jehovah. "The Lord God is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." Thine is the bonds of womanhood.

SARAH M. GERRICK.

THE ADVOCATE.

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A Happy New Year.

"A happy New Year," to all the readers of the Advocate; happy in the highest and noblest sense of the word. We wish them all as much health and temporal prosperity, as will conduce to their best interests; but above all, we wish that their souls may be in health and prosper, and that every day of the year on which we are just entering, may be marked by untiring zeal and increasing usefulness. We have reached another of those way-marks which serve to remind us of the rapidity of our progress through life, and the approaching termination of our pilgrimage. Surely it becomes us here, as individuals, and as a society, to pause, and erect an Ebenezer, for "hitherto the Lord hath helped us." Not one good thing has failed of all his promises, but mercy and faithfulness have attended us at every step, through all the eventful scenes of the past year.

There is much cause for regret and humiliation on our part, as we review the past, and contrast the goodness of God, with the returns of service we have rendered; but though the future is shrouded in darkness, we may look with hope and cheerfulness to its duties and events, relying on Him who has promised—"As by day is, so shall thy strength be."

Could the record of that portion of time, which is now vanished into the far-reaching past, be unfolded to mortal eyes, what a page would it present! how much more of sin and sorrow, of vice and its attendant misery, would be there embodied, than the imagination had ever conceived of, previously. And it, such a record is faithfully kept, of human character and action; not the faintest outline can be lost, if the whole will be exhibited by Jehovah himself, that day when the books shall be opened, and men and angels shall hear the things written therein. Now should this overwhelming thought stimulate us to greater activity in our Master's cause, if by any sacrifice of personal ease and comfort, we may diminish the vast amount of crime and woe, and be instrumental in plucking souls as brands from the burning! There is abundant encouragement for us to labor, in the fact, that God has blessed and is blessing our feeble efforts with almost unparalleled success. The change in public opinion, on the subject of Moral Reform, during the last year, has been greater, more extensive, than we had dared to anticipate.

When truth comes in contact at every step with the long established usages of society, and the strongest prejudices and passions of the heart, its progress will naturally be slow; but every inch gained in this way will tell on the strength and resources of the enemy. We say it, not in a spirit of boasting, but of devout thanksgiving to God; that when we look at the accessions to our ranks, made during the last twelve months, we are impressed with a deeper sense of the majesty and omnipotence of truth, than we have ever before experienced. The eternal and self-evident principles, which lie at the foundation of our efforts, commend themselves to every man's conscience whenever they are clearly presented to the mind, and distinctly understood. We are so constituted, that however we may break away from the restraints of virtue, and endeavor to stifle the still small voice of God within us, there is a chord that will still vibrate to the touch of truth, so long as the faintest resemblance of God's image in our intellectual nature remains. And what matters it, though the instruments employed to present this truth are feeble and apparently inadequate to bring about the desired results, if the strength of an almighty arm is put forth on their behalf? Just so it should be; that the pride of human glory may be restrained, and all the praise given to him from whom wisdom and knowledge, and every good work, proceedeth.

Another ground of encouragement, is the rapid increase of organized associations, for the promotion of Moral Reform, in the various sections of our country. The number of auxiliaries to this Society has been more than doubled during the last year, amounting now to 325. If the members of these societies are all true to the spirit and letter of their pledge, what an amount of healthful influence is thus brought to bear on the morals of the community! We entreat every one of these dear sisters, by all the considerations that can affect a rational and immortal being, to remember the responsibilities that rest upon them, and beware of bringing reproach on the holy cause they have espoused. The humblest and most obscure individual may move forward this mighty engine, by fervent prayer and the silent influence of a consistent example; or by a contrary course, she may paralyze the efforts of the Society to which she belongs, and bring shame and confusion of face to all its members. More depends on individual exertion than is usually imagined. No one can fail in duty, without materially affecting the interests of the whole, and none can shift personal responsibility on another, under any pretence whatever. There is something for every one of us to perform, which no other being in the universe can do for us, and unless every woman does her duty, the cause of God will suffer for the neglect.

In conclusion, we ask all the friends of moral purity, to join us in a renewed consecration of ourselves to the great work in which we are mutually engaged. Let us determine on enlarged plans of action, let us attempt great things, and by the blessing of God, we shall accomplish them. "Who shall harm us, if we be followers of that which is good?" We are surrounded with a cloud of witnesses, near us, though invisible, like the stars by day; and among them are some, who a few months since were toiling at our side, but who now "rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Soon, very soon we shall be called to enter the presence of our Lord and Master, and we shall not then remember with sorrow, any sacrifices

we may have made to advance his cause on the earth. Mothers, wives, and daughters, come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Come with the faith which brought our Puritan mothers through all the perils of the deep into a howling wilderness, where even the stout heart of manhood quailed beneath the terrors that encompassed them. God hath given us a warmth of feeling and steadfastness of purpose, which we may and ought to use in a nobler service than our sex has hitherto done. Consecrate yourselves anew to Him who bought you with His blood, and seek only to know his will in relation to every question of duty. Pray for us, we beseech you; for our paper, our missionaries, and the other departments of our arduous work. We are weak, and need divine assistance; we are fallible and imperfect, and need divine guidance; and for this we ask your earnest petitions at the throne of grace. May God grant that those who now go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, may soon come again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them!

Extracts from Report of the Visiting Committee.

26th. Met with an instance to-day which led me to feel that the Spirit of the Lord can, and does, sometimes, subdue opposition to our efforts. A lady with whom I was conversing, seemed to manifest unusual interest in the object of my visits. She subscribed for the paper with avidity, and said she would place it in the hands of her apprentices, and her prayer should be, that they might not be left to ridicule the cause, as she had done. She then stated, that previous to her conversion, a pious young lady had often presented the Advocate to herself and her gay companions, and desired them to read it. But they abused her kindness, and repelled the hated monitor with scorn.

The Christian spirit manifested by the young lady, awakened remorse in the mind of Miss ——. A while after this, when her sins were set in order before her, her treatment of this kind friend weighed heavily upon her heart, and the burthen was not removed till (as she trusts) her peace was made with God. There is now a thorough change in her views relative to this subject, and she seems deeply solicitous that all her sex should feel as she does with regard to it.

29th. Met with a woman who informed me that the departed McDowall had been the means of her temporal and eternal salvation. She spoke of him with much emotion, and after some hesitation, proceeded to tell me something of her history. She stated that she was on the point of establishing a house of ill fame, when, most providentially, she heard him preach on the seventh commandment.—The sermon was to her as "a nail in a sure place." She immediately abandoned her purpose, and has since sought an honest living, by honest means. She now keeps a respectable boarding house, is a regular subscriber to our paper, and appears to feel bound by ten thousand obligations to do all in her power for the advancement of moral purity.

A few doors from this I entered a dwelling, and found a number of sailors sitting together, apparently unoccupied. I gave to each of them a tract, and conversed with them about their soul's salvation. My fears are always awakened when approaching men of this class, and I was at first much embarrassed; but they behaved so respectfully that I was encouraged to speak freely. One of them said to his com-

